



## *Superior Court of California County of Fresno*

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### **PRESS RELEASE REVISED FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – APRIL 24, 2003**

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### **Superior Court Clerk's Office Hours Reduction**

Due to the State fiscal crisis and significantly increasing workloads in many areas of the Court, the Fresno Superior Court Clerks' Offices are temporarily reducing their public operating hours. Effective **June 2, 2003**, the offices will be open to the public from **8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** until further notice.

Public services, including conducting business at the public counters, answering phone calls and other types of public assistance, will only be offered during the reduced hours. **Courtroom hours are not affected.**

During this fiscal crisis, the California Administrative Office of the Courts has given the Superior Court authorization to provide a drop box for filing court documents from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. This authorization will continue for the duration of the fiscal crisis. The drop box will be located outside the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Civil Department Clerk's Office. Properly completed documents which are accompanied by the correct fee (if applicable) that are time-stamped before 4:00 p.m. will be filed as of the day received. Documents time-stamped after 4:00 p.m. will be filed as of the next business day. Incomplete or incorrect documents and fees will be returned without filing.

The Central Division Courthouse Offices located in Downtown Fresno that will operate with reduced hours include:

- Traffic (B-1)
- Criminal Misdemeanor and Felony Divisions (B-1 and 4<sup>th</sup> floor)
- Limited Civil (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

- Small Claims (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)
- Unlimited Civil (4<sup>th</sup> floor)
- Family Law (4<sup>th</sup> floor)
- Probate (4<sup>th</sup> floor)

The Clerk's Offices at Juvenile Delinquency Court located on 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the Juvenile Dependency Court located on the Fulton Mall will also be operating at reduced hours from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Clerk's Office hours of operation at Court Archives (1963 E Street) will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The public service hours at the Family Support Clerk's Office located at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite 010 are **not** being reduced at this time and will continue to be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Public service hours at the outlying courts are **not** being reduced at this time. The Clerk's Offices in Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Kerman, Kingsburg, Sanger, Selma and Reedley will continue to be open from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

These reductions in public service hours are necessary because the Superior Court has been required by the State to reduce its operating budget by five percent. This reduction totals over \$1.7 million in this years' budget. In addition to reduction of public hours, other actions the Court has been forced to take include nearly 50 staff vacancies that will not be filled, reducing services to self-represented litigants, and implementation of a voluntary furlough plan for court employees to help reduce payroll costs.

These budget cuts come at a time when the workload in many areas is increasing. For example, the Traffic Division is dealing with a 100% increase in traffic citation filings since the beginning of this year.

We know the reduction in Clerk's Office hours will have an impact on the public. Unfortunately, the budget cuts the State is requiring leaves the Court few alternatives.

**## end ##**